DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 339 660 SO 021 602

AUTHOR Philipps, Karen
TITLE The Adventures of Salik the Husky.
INSTITUTION Curriculum Development Centre, Canberra (Australia).
REPORT NO ISBN-0-642-53165-X
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 29p.
PUB TYPE Creative Works (Literature,Drama,Fine Arts) (030) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Animals; Area Studies; *Childrens Literature; Environment; Foreign Countries; *Geographic Regions; Global Approach; Instructional Materials; Intermediate Grades; Physical Environment; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS *Antarctica; *Dogs; Huskies

ABSTRACT

This story, for readers aged 8 to 10 years, is about Salik, a husky puppy who journeys from Greenland to Antarctica to become a sledge dog. Through Salik's training and his first sledge journey, children find out about the life of a dog team and the work the dogs do. The story is accompanied by a number of illustrations by Christine Forsyth. A glossary is included, as is a list of other materials on Antarctica for younger readers. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

PACIFIC CIRCLE CONSORTIUM

The Adventures of Salik the Husky

ED339660

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

H. HACKING

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 021 602

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Karen Philipps

Published in 1986 by
The Curriculum Development Centre
PO Box 34
Woden ACT 2606

ISBN 0 642 53165 X

©Commonwealth of Australia 1986

Editor: Pamela Hewitt
Design and illustration: Christine Forsyth

The Antarctic Project was co-ordinated by Murray Yaxley of the Tasmanian Department of Education

Christchurch co-ordinator: Bede Cooper
Wellington co-ordinator: Harvey McQueen
Canberra co-ordinators: Marguerite Wells
Pamela Hewitt
Paul Fennell
David Francis
Chris Vening

The Author

Karen Philipps graduated from the University of Tasmania with a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education. After teaching in Tasmanian and Western Australian schools, she worked in the Department of Practical Teaching at Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education in Western Australia.

Karen is now married with two children and lives in Kent, England.

Acknowledgements

Our thanks are due to Noel Kemp, Marjorie Pollock, Jenny Scott and Bernie Sorensen, who provided photographs and drawings used in the trial edition of this book. The illustration on page 8 is based on a drawing by Marjorie Pollock, and figures on pages 12 and 13 are from original drawings by Nils Lied.

SO

The Adventures of Salik the Husky

Karen Philipps

Illustrated by Christine Forsyth

Curriculum Development Centre Canberra Australia

Introduction

We meet Salik when he is a husky pup in Greenland and we follow him in his journey to Antarctica. On the deck of a ship, the huskies head south through the hot tropics with stops at Hobart and Macquarie Island.

After the long journey, Salik arrives at an Antarctic base where he learns to be a sledge dog. When he is old enough, Salik takes his place at the traces and his first sledge journey. We find out about the life of a dog team and the work the dogs do.

When we leave Salik, he is among an emperor penguin colony, dreaming of the day when he will lead the dog team.

Salik was a sturdy puppy with a soft, fluffy coat. He often got up to mischief as he roamed around his village in Greenland. But all the Eskimos who lived there loved a young husky. Salik was always forgiven for running off with pieces of clothing and knocking over cooking pots.

Then something happened to change Salik's happy life. He sniffed the air uncertainly. A shiver went through his body. He was really worried. He just didn't know what was going on. He crept closer to his mother and snuggled up to her. If she was with him, he felt better.

Umiak, his mother, was also puzzled. Where were they? Why was everything so strange? Until this day Umiak had been one of a team, pulling a sledge across the snow and ice of Eastern Greenland. Salik would ride at the back of the sledge near the driver because, at two months, he was too young to help pull. But now they were on the deck of a ship. It rolled from side to side.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Salik impatiently stamped his paws and looked for some snow to eat. There was none - just boxes and kennels all around him. The wet steel decks covered with wooden slats were uncomfortable. He wished he could curl up in some snow.

As the time passed, Salik began to realise that he was going on a long journey to some far-off land. It seemed like it would never end. He and his mother and the other huskies were miserable. The weather became dreadfully hot, they were stung by the salt spray and sometimes there were storms and the rain poured on to the decks. They were protected from the sun and wind by a covering of loose planks which helped the water run off and let in fresh air. Even so, it was boring to be chained up all the time. Salik hated it more than the others as he was such a lively puppy.

The long days turned into weeks and Salik became sadder and sadder. The highlight of his day was when his friend Leiff, the dog-master, came to feed him. Salik would greet him joyfully. Sometimes Leiff would bring him some ice from the freezer. Salik licked it happily. But because it was so hot, the ice always melted very quickly. Leiff never said very much, but Salik could tell he loved the dogs by the way he handled them and by the tone of his voice. His favourite was young Salik.

Salik Reaches a New Land

The days were becoming longer, Salik noticed. One morning when he woke, the ship's crew was very busy. All this activity made him curious, so he went outside the kennel to see what was happening.

There was land in the distance - a new land. It was very strange, covered in green trees and grass with no snow to be seen. It also felt too hot for Salik, but he thought that anything would be better than being cooped up on the ship. He strained to get free, the collar pulling at his neck.

When they reached the harbour, however, the dogs didn't get off. Instead, people came on board

and more boxes and equipment were loaded on. The ship was docked in Hobart, where many Polar ships had stopped before with scientists and explorers on board. People came to look over the Antarctic-bound ship and the huskies were a big attraction.

Some children came to see the dogs and Salik longed to leave with them when they went home. What a joy it would be to run and play again. Salik was a brave puppy, but he gave a little whine of disappointment when he was left with the other dogs. His mother licked him gently. They were both fed up with the long journey and they'd had enough of the noise and heat.

That night, the boat began to move and Salik felt the familiar throb of the engines. The waves were higher now and the winds stronger. There was a full moon. Salik gazed up at the night sky through the planks. The stars looked different. Salik had never noticed the beautiful stars in the shape of a cross that hung across the southern sky. It was growing pleasantly cold and Salik felt strangely comforted by the Southern Cross as he nestled next to Umiak.

When the ship sailed close to Macquarie Island, the seas were becoming rougher and the island was covered in mist and rain. Macquarie Island was bleak and cold, surrounded by steep slopes and tall cliffs. Salik watched the island fade out of sight as he drifted off to sleep.

Another Land of Ice and Snow

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A few days later, Salik and Umiak caught sight of great flat-topped islands of ice floating through the seas. These icebergs rode the waves majestically. As the ships went further south, there were more icebergs and they were bigger. Then they came to parts of the sea that were frozen over. The pack ice glistened in the sun. Sometimes the ship smashed into the pack ice, which crumbled and floated away in pieces.

Then, very late one evening as Salik was dozing, he sensed a change in the sound of the ship's engines. They were slowing down. He looked across the water and saw lights. There were buildings on a rocky outcrop. Was that snow he could see beyond them? The wind was cold and strong. Salik felt good.

Members of the ship's crew were scrambling all over the deck. The dogs became excited. They all yelped at once. Some men yelled orders. Others tightened ropes and clanked chains. There was great activity.

The dogs were taken ashore first. Then the men could reach the holds of the ship. The dogs went mad with delight when finally they touched land again. Salik ran round and round in circles, howling with glee, eating, digging and rolling in the snow. Even dignified Umiak acted like a puppy until Leiff gave them all a sharp command to behave.

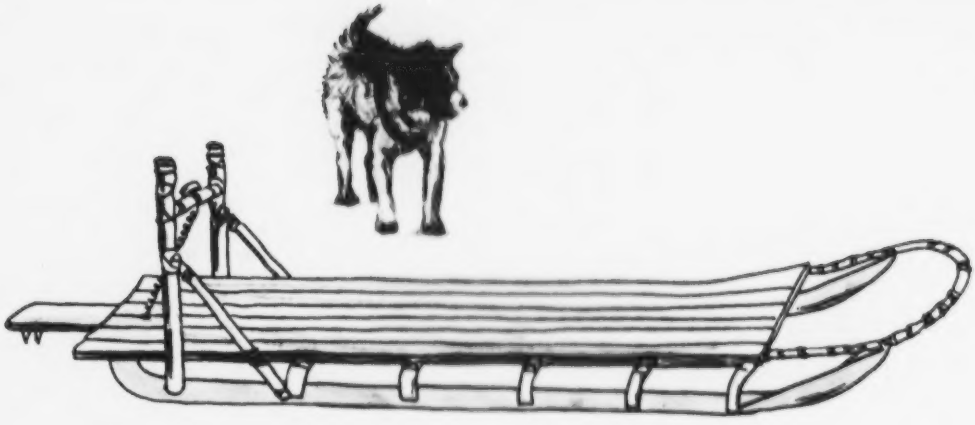
At long last, Salik and the other huskies had arrived at the Antarctic station. Now it was time for Salik to begin his training in pulling the sledge. He was eager to learn his new job. Huskies love to run through the snow with the sound of sledge-runners behind them.

Salik got used to being handled by different men, although Leiff would always be his real master. At first, he just walked around with a harness and collar on, helping to do odd jobs such as checking radio masts and picking up litter that had been blown about in the wind. Best of all, he loved to watch the animals. The seals and penguins amused him with their funny waddling on land and yet they were fast and agile in the water. The skuas were always hovering about looking for rubbish or a dead seal or penguin to eat. Salik felt that he would never tire of this life.

Salik Goes To Work

Salik enjoyed his life of freedom, but eventually he had to be trained as a team dog. He was made part of a nine-dog sledge team. The sledge was made of long-grained timber and, instead of nails, it was kept together with pieces of untanned leather or rawhide. It was made this way so it would not break up as it bounced across the bumps and hollows of the ice.

Because he was young and had not pulled a sledge before, Salik was put at the back of the team. (The further back in the team, the lighter the load.) It was difficult, even so, and the other dogs would yell and snap at him if he did something wrong. They soon realised that Salik was clever and willing to learn. He had the makings of an exceptionally good team dog.



Salik looked up to the lead dog of the team. His name was Ajungalak, which means "happy". He was a very intelligent dog and understood all the Eskimo commands the dog-master gave: "whoa, whoa" (stop, stop) and "mush" (go ahead), "illi, illi" (go right) and "ee yuk" (go left). Salik was eager to learn these commands and it soon became his driving ambition to become lead dog.

Days and weeks passed and Salik became better at his task. He and his team-mate, Krumik, would yelp joyfully when Leiff appeared, because that usually meant they were going on a run. Salik was no longer a puppy, but a strong young dog of nine months. He was a good worker with a strong sense of responsibility. His husky coat was very thick, long and warm, just like the fleece of a sheep. His tail was long too, with a curl at the end, just right for covering his nostrils when settling in for the night.

One evening Salik was busy eating his way through his ration of dried meat and fat called

pemmican. His favourite food was fresh seal meat, but he had liked pemmican ever since he was a puppy in Greenland. The Eskimos have made pemmican for longer than anyone can remember.

Just then, Leiff came in and spoke affectionately. "Well, Salik, now is the chance to test your skills. Tomorrow we are going on a trip to count emperor penguins. We'll be gone for quite a few days."

Salik was tense with excitement and could hardly sleep that night. He bayed at the moon, but one of the men came and threw a snowball at him to make him stop. The next morning, as soon as he caught sight of Leiff, he jumped and strained on his hind legs and ran around in circles, yelping and howling, tugging at his chains. Leiff's face was almost completely covered by his balaclava and he wore mittens, gloves, sunglasses and special boots called mukluks. He also wore a wind-proof jacket and trousers. They were going out on a run, all right.

Salik watched impatiently as the sledge was packed with all the things they would need for the trip. Everything was tied securely to the sledge. The dogs were strapped into their harnesses. These strong harnesses were four centimetres thick and made of rawhide, but they were covered with a softer material so they would not hurt.

Ajungalak was leading the team so he had been fed and harnessed first. It was up to Ajungalak, the "king dog", to keep the peace. What a proud team! Their tails waved in the air. Leiff, the driver, was standing at the back of the sledge, using the handle bar. His whip was strapped to his arm. He used it only if the dogs were fighting or in a tangle, but they hated the sting of the whip, so just the sound of it was usually enough to remind them to behave. In fact, Salik had felt the whip one day when he had a fight with another member of the team. He wasn't in a hurry to feel its sting again.

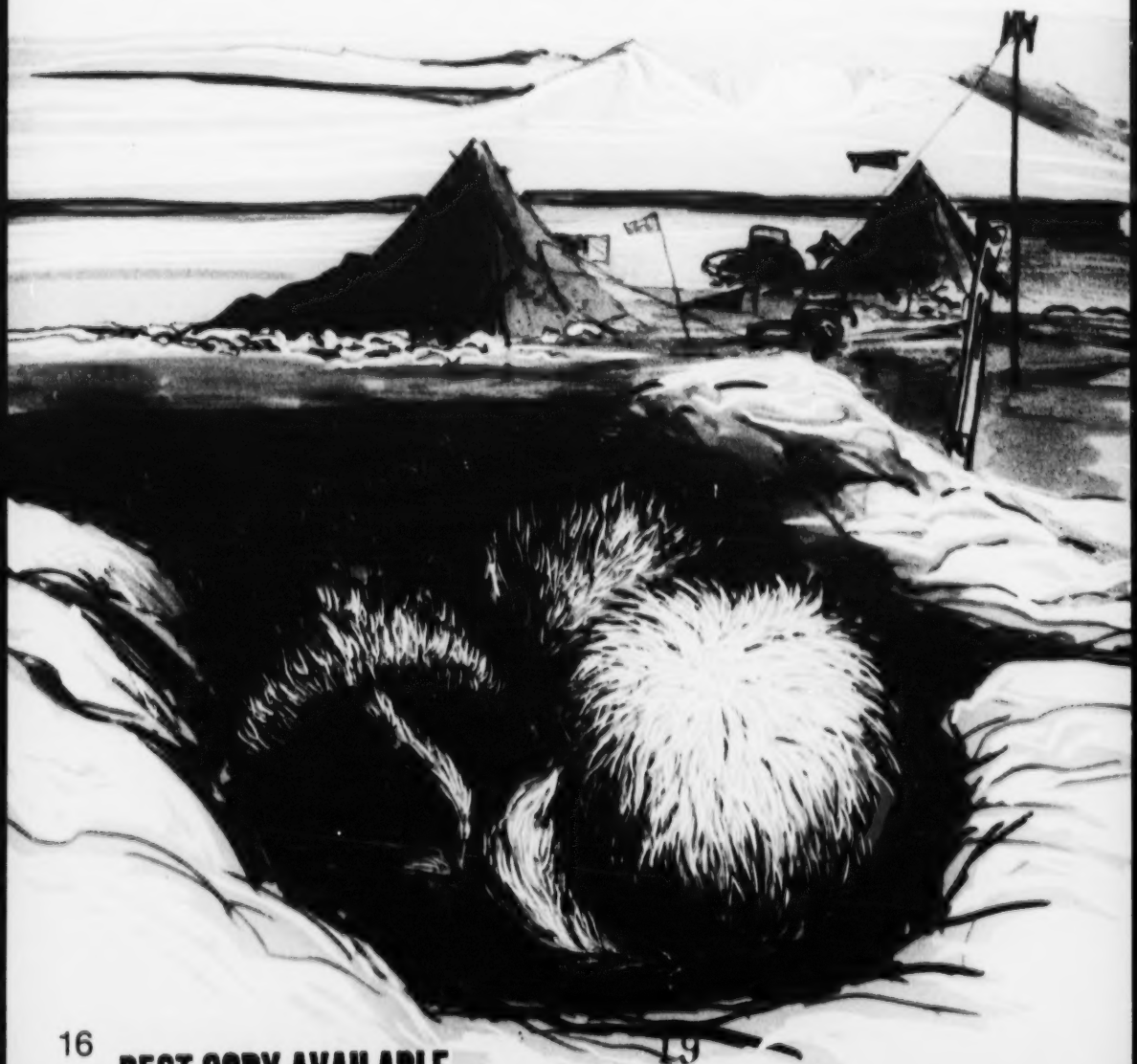
When the dogs were settled, Leiff nodded to his partner. At last the men and the dogs were ready. They were off! The dogs pulled the sledge eagerly.

Across The White Plains

Out on the plateau, the flat empty land of Antarctica, there were no living creatures, only the endless whiteness of ice and snow. The only sounds were the wind and the swishing and slapping of the sledge-runners on the dry, grainy snow. They crossed the snow bridges easily, but they had to watch out for the cracks in the ice called crevasses, and meltpools, where the ice was thin and it was soft and dangerous underneath.

One day, Salik and Krumik lost their balance in some snow that gave way. Fortunately, the harness was strong enough to hold them, so they did not fall into the depths of the crevasse. This incident gave Salik the fright of his life.

The wind picked up the snow and made the going difficult. Most of all, the dogs hated the drifting snow because it filled their eyes, forcing them to stop. They would try to brush it away with their paws. The snow that settled into their coats melted and froze again. It tangled up their hair and made their coats as stiff as suits of armour.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

When they stopped to camp at the end of the day, they were all tired out. The dogs were tied up to a long, central wire during the night. The wire was kept in place with a spike buried deep in the ice. After a meal of pemmican and snow, Salik and the other members of his team curled up to sleep. To keep warm, they carefully swished their tails over their bodies and across their faces. They turned their backs to the wind, crossed their front legs and buried their noses in their paws with the tips of their curly tails covering their nostrils.

In the morning, Salik was completely covered with wind-blown snow. Although it was impossible to see him, he was in no danger. He was still able to breathe through his fluffed hair and the loose snow.

Overnight a blizzard had begun and the winds of this snowstorm were incredibly fierce. The swirling snow made it difficult to see and splinters of ice lashed at the dogs. The sledge kept slipping and the dogs had to zig-zag across the ice to keep from being run over by it. At one stage the whole team slid sideways. Finally they found a spot where there was some protection from the wind. That night Leiff had to pick out ice which was stuck between the dogs' toes so the skin there would not be damaged.

The blizzard lasted three days, but when it was over, they set out again. Once more the sound of the dog-pulled sledge was heard on the ice. One day a plane arrived to drop fresh supplies to the team. For the dogs it meant fresh food, while the men received messages from the base. Everyone was pleased at the arrival.

Gradually, Salik noticed a change in the air and he saw hungry, brown skuas circling overhead. They were back at the coast and on the sea ice was a large colony of emperor penguins.

The emperors are the largest penguins, standing one metre high. They are colourful birds with golden patches on their ears which blend in with their lemon-yellow necks and white breasts. On their backs are blue-grey feathers that shine like satin and their slender bills curve downwards and are streaked with purple and lilac.

Salik and the rest of the team stopped a long way from the penguins. They could study the birds only at a distance. Leiff made sure that the dogs didn't disturb the emperors and their chicks.

They made camp and the men started work, counting and tagging the penguins. Salik rested, stretched out in the sun, getting ready for the journey home. He wondered if the return trip would be difficult, but he was still looking forward to the challenge. He hoped to go on many more trips. The

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

next time he wanted to be nearer the leader of the team. Maybe one day he would be leader himself.

Salik's experience was growing and so was he. One day he would be ready to fight for the leadership. But he could only make his challenge after many more trips.

Salik was a healthy, clever dog. He was born to be a leader. But in the meantime, he was happy to dream of the day when he would be in charge and all the other dogs would look to him as the "king dog" of the team.

Glossary

balaclava	A woollen helmet which covers the head and eyes
blizzard	A violent windstorm that carries dry snowflakes and is intensely cold.
crevasse	Big cracks in the ice, formed when the ice moves over uneven rocks or when floating ice spreads.
emperor penguin	The largest living penguin. It is beautifully coloured and lives on the coast and near Antarctica.
iceberg	A very large piece of floating ice which has broken off a glacier or the ice shelf. An iceberg can be more than 20 kilometres long. Antarctic icebergs are usually flat-topped.
king dog	The lead dog of a sledge team.
meltpool	A pool of water which forms on the ice surface in summer.
mukluks	High, soft windproof, fur-lined boots first made by the Eskimos.
pack ice	When there are storms or the weather gets warmer, the frozen sea around Antarctica breaks up. The broken pieces are called pack ice.
pemmican	Lean, ground meat or fish and melted fat first made by North American Indians. There are different kinds for people and dogs.
plateau	A very high and often very large plain.

sea ice	The surface of the sea around Antarctica is frozen and the big area stretching out from the land is called sea ice.
skua	A kind of gull which lives in and near Antarctica. It eats fish, krill, penguin chicks and eggs. It also feeds on dead animals, such as seals.
sledge runner	A long piece of wood on which a sledge slides over the ice.
snow-bridge	A layer of ice and snow that covers the opening of a crevasse.
tagging	Attaching a tag of metal or plastic to a bird or other animal so that its movements and age can be recorded when it is found again.

The Adventures of Salik the Husky is one of a series of four storybooks which are part of the Pacific Circle Consortium's Antarctic Project.

Other storybooks in the series are:

Rocky the Rockhopper Penguin (8-10 years)
The tale of a brave and inquisitive rockhopper and the voyage from his Macquarie Island home across the Southern Ocean to Antarctica.

Oscar (10-12 years)
This true story tells of a husky named Oscar and his fight to remain "king dog" of the sledge team. He spends some time at the Melbourne Zoo and returns to spend his last days in the ice and snow.

Castles of Ice (11-13 years)
A true story of Antarctic adventure, Castles of Ice describes a sledging trip to the Douglas Islands and the difficulties and rewards of working in Antarctica.

Learning Outcomes and Activities which can be used with these modules are included in the teachers' guide. **Teaching and Learning about Antarctica**, to be published by the Curriculum Development Centre.

Sourcebooks which can be used with the storybooks are:

Penguins (10-12 years)
Background information on Penguins and case studies of three penguins - the Adelie, the emperor and the rockhopper.

Antarctica's Secrets Revealed (10-13 years)
This is in question-and-answer format, and provides a wealth of information about the Antarctic continent.

Living and Working in Antarctica (11-14 years)
Why do people brave the ice and snow to work in the harsh Antarctic environment? Here are some of the answers.

Antarctic Discovery and Exploration (10-14 years)
A look at Antarctica from the first sightings and the expeditions of the heroic era through to present day research.

Macquarie Island (11-13 years)
This Australian sub-Antarctic island is introduced with information on its animals and plants as well as on human activities.

Campbell Island (11-13 years)
Campbell Island comes under New Zealand administration and is a meteorological base. The animals and plants are described and the effects of human interference are examined.

Plants and Animals of Antarctica (11-14 years)
A filmstrip with 72 frames and an accompanying script and audio-tape.

Oceanic Birds of Antarctica (11-14 years)
Case studies of three Antarctic birds – the south polar skua, the snow petrel and the Adelie penguin

For older readers:

The Polar Continent

Seals of the Southern Ocean

Whales of the Southern Ocean

Antarctic Foodchains

The Scientist at Work

It Happened in Antarctica

From Snow to Icebergs

Ecosystems of the Southern Ocean

International Relations in Antarctica

The Geology and Mineral Resources of Antarctica

For further information contact:
The Curriculum Development Centre,
P.O. Box 34,
Woden,
A.C.T. 2606,
Australia.

Murray Yaxley,
Curriculum Centre,
57 Brisbane St.,
Hobart,
Tasmania 7000,
Australia.

Bede Cooper,
Office of the District Senior Inspector of Primary Schools,
P.O. Box 2612,
Christchurch,
New Zealand.

Harvey McQueen,
Department of Education,
Private Bag,
Wellington,
New Zealand.

ISBN 0 642 53165 X

BEST COPY AVAILABLE